



# The Patrons Chain

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE

## **In this Issue:**

July 21, 2023

[EPA restrictions harm potential crop yields in buffer zones](#) by Betsy E. Huber

[Community Service threads through Grange](#)

[Degrees](#) by Pete Pompper

[Grange Feature: Clarkes Grange #261, Oregon](#)

[Closing soon: Order your 2023 Grange shirts](#)

[Advocacy Playbook: Farm Bills are tough to pass](#)

[Participate in a National Grange service project](#)

[Register for National Grange Convention](#)

[Participate in Multigenerational Panel Discussion on Rural Mental Health](#)

[Grange Supply Store: Grange Socks](#)

[Grange Supply Store: Raised Right Here Vinyl Stickers](#)

[Grange Member Benefit: ODP Business Solutions](#)

## **EPA restrictions harm potential crop yields in buffer zones**

By [Betsy E. Huber](#), National Grange President

Fifty years ago, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was passed to protect and conserve species facing extinction. While this is a noble goal, few understand the impact the ESA can have on agriculture, family farm sustainability, and food security.

The U.S. EPA has inserted large buffer zones for certain pesticide use in counties where listed species may be present or their possible habitats exist. Even if a habitat exists on only a few acres, the entire county is restricted from pesticide use; thus the farmer's crop yield is reduced and income is lessened. For instance, an herbicide was eliminated from use on approximately 1 million acres in 11 counties in Georgia, but it was found that only .37 percent of the area was suitable habitat. With precision agriculture capabilities today, possible habitat areas can be much more specifically delineated, allowing farming on more acreage that is needed for production.

As the number of farms declines rapidly and the loss of U.S. agricultural land exceeds 200 acres every hour, it is expected that farmers will need to increase food production by 70% by 2050 to sustain the growing population. This can only be accomplished if economically effective tools are available to farmers to help prevent pests from stealing food, feed and fiber crops.

Funding is needed to help educate farmers on ways to protect endangered species, create better maps of where species occur, and research additional ways to reduce risks from pesticides.

## **Community Service threads through Grange Degrees**

By [Pete Pompper](#), National Grange Community Service Director

*"With kindly feelings toward all orders which seek to promote human welfare, let us strive with them for the good we can do for our fellow-beings. Nothing on earth brings greater satisfaction to the heart of him who serves than to rejoice with those who are joyful or to sympathize with those who mourn. To aid a Brother or Sister in bearing a weary burden constitutes life's highest privilege."*



As I was looking for inspiration for this week's Patrons Chain article, I found this passage. It made me realize that in the earliest part of our Grange journey, we were instructed in the importance of community service. As I read through the various Manuals, it is one of the common threads in our Order - each Degree has a charge by one of the Officers explaining the importance of giving back in some way. The above quote is given by the Installing Officer at the end of the Junior Grange Installation of Officers.

The first line of the quote is also noteworthy, as it talks about the importance of working with other like-minded organizations for the betterment of the community. We are seeing more

Granges working with more groups all the time. We are realizing that we can't and don't have to do it all by ourselves.

I am very proud of the partnership we have fostered with [Rural Minds](#) (thank you Burton Eller for starting this process) on a National level that so many Community Granges have responded to, and have held or are holding Rural Suicide Awareness and Mental Health programs. Granges are teaming up with other groups that focus on these needs in rural America, and the community turnout has been amazing. It shows how much the Grange is looked at as a trusted organization in the local communities and wants to help - even on an uncomfortable subject.

The more we work with others not only strengthens our communities but also the Grange. It gives your Grange visibility with others and in the community you serve. We always talk about opening our doors to the world not only to help people, but we also want to work with others.

Think of how this will help build your membership. How many of us only belong to one group or organization? People like to be part of groups that are community service minded, have fun, and can socialize on many levels. The Grange can fulfill that need.

*"Help us to control our spirits, and to do to others as we would have them do to us; as we grow in years, may we gain in knowledge and usefulness."* – Junior Grange Chaplain

### **Grange Feature: Clarkes Grange #261, Oregon**

*Submitted by Liz Dehne, Oregon State Grange Community Service Director*

Clarkes Grange #261 in Beavercreek, Oregon, has been an active community supporter since it was founded in 1893. The current Grange Hall, a community landmark, was built 100 years ago. The hall is used for monthly Grange meetings, local community events, reunions, fundraisers, and even exercise classes.



Clarkes has many Community Service outreach projects. The one that stands out is how they use funds they receive from the cell tower located on their property. In 2010 when they agreed to have the cell tower installed, they also voted to use all the proceeds from the cell tower for charitable causes and scholarships. For most Granges, this would be a tough decision since we all need extra funds to do maintenance, hall improvements and sometimes even to pay the electricity bill. This amazing decision has resulted in over \$127,000 going to charitable causes and \$46,000 going to scholarships. A major part of this project has gone to support local students. This includes support for the Parents Teachers Group, fundraisers, dictionaries, Key Club, sports, music, and graduation parties.

In addition, this community-focused Grange makes monthly homemade meals they take to the Homeless Veterans Center, holds two adopt-a-road litter pick-ups each year, provides dictionaries to every Clarkes 3<sup>rd</sup> grader, and sponsors and plans the annual Clarkes Community Picnic where neighbors meet, visit and play. They also have a "Home Health Closet" with medical equipment available to the community, free of charge.

More information about Clarkes can be found [on their Facebook page](#).

***Do you have a Grange in your state you'd like to feature or "brag on?" Provide a write-up to National Grange Communications Director [Philip Vonada](#) and you may see it in the Patrons Chain or Good Day! magazine.***

## **Closing soon: Order your 2023 Grange shirts**



The National Grange has released its 2023 Grange t-shirt. A modern label-looking image that includes the Grange logo and the phrase "First Voice of the American Farmer" as well as "Esto Perpetua" and "Established 1867" appears on the back of this District brand t-shirt that comes in six colors for youth sizes and eight colors for adult unisex sizes (heathered colors of cardinal, navy, kelly green, brown, turquoise, purple and charcoal; and black). District shirts are true-to-fit or a bit generous, and very soft with a slightly larger-than-average rib knit neck.

Single shirts are \$20 each with \$5 shipping. If you are placing a group order, you may use the "multiple quantities" button you see just under the shirt pricing, you will enjoy a reduced shipping rate.

You may also choose to add for only \$3 your name or the name of your Grange in an imprint on the front chest pocket area or leave the front blank.

**This is a limited-time sale that closes July 31.**

To order, visit <http://grange.biz/grangeshirt>

## **Advocacy Playbook: Farm Bills are tough to pass**

By [Burton Eller](#), National Grange Legislative Director



### **What it is:**

The original Farm Bills were enacted as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal legislation during the 1930s Great Depression and Dust Bowl era. Their purpose was to ensure an adequate food supply, keep food prices fair for farmers and consumers, and sustain America's natural resources base. While Farm Bills have changed and expanded their scope over the last ninety plus years, their basic goals have remained the same. The current [Farm Bill](#) was enacted in 2018 and expires September 30, 2023.

### **What it does:**

The current Farm Bill has twelve titles that include commodity price supports, conservation, trade, nutrition assistance and feeding programs, credit, rural development, research and extension, forestry, energy, horticulture, crop insurance, and "miscellaneous." The 2023 Farm Bill is projected to cost \$428 billion to cover these twelve titles. A breakdown of expenditures by title looks like this:

Nutrition assistance – 76%

Crop insurance – 9%

Conservation – 7%

Commodities – 7%

All other (credit, research, rural development, energy, forestry, horticulture, trade, etc.) – 1%

### **What's in play:**

The [Senate](#) and [House](#) Agriculture Committees have conducted a series of hearings and listening sessions in Washington and around the country but are still many months away from



voting on a new Farm Bill. That means Congress will have to pass an extension of the current bill by September 30. In the meantime, major issues in each of the 12 titles are beginning to take shape. Here are some of the challenging issues in play as the Ag Committees begin their mark-up sessions later this year:

**Commodities** – Find the money to raise reference prices; avoid pitting commodities and regions against each other.

**Conservation** – The [Inflation Reduction Act](#) provided a huge amount of money for conservation and environmental programs. Will Congress now consider the conservation title funded by the IRA and use farm bill conservation funds for other titles such as nutrition assistance?

**Trade** – Ag groups are pushing for increased funding for foreign market assistance and development.

**Nutrition assistance** – Work requirements and what products will be eligible for [SNAP benefits](#).

**Credit** – Increase in [Farm Service Loan](#) limits.

**Rural development** – Increase rural broadband funding and consolidate USDA broadband programs.

**Research** – Restore funding for research, which has fallen by one-third since 2002.

**Forestry** – Reforestation and forest management.

**Energy** – Loans for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

**Horticulture** – Automation and mechanization research to solve persistent labor shortages.

**Crop insurance** – How to include crops for which there is little publicly available market price data.

**Miscellaneous** – Disease response and prevention for the livestock industry.



## Participate in a National Grange service project

For 20 years, the Grange has been the leading voice advocating for the expansion of broadband into rural communities. Most frequently, we focus on the infrastructure of build-out, which is still a major factor keeping millions of Americans from high-speed, reliable internet to their homes. However, for others, broadband is available but unaffordable.

For this reason, the National Grange is actively working to promote the [FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program](#), which provides a discount benefit for broadband to low-income and other eligible individuals. After receiving a grant to assist with the program's promotion, we have begun registering Granges to take part in the work to inform people in the communities in which Granges are located, and beyond, about ACP.

Please remember that taking part in this outreach program is **community service**.

Certainly, we want all Grange members to know about the benefit and sign up if they are eligible, but this cannot stop within our doors. Just like giving nonperishable items to the food bank is important, so is taking the information about ACP to the director of the food bank and asking for it to be placed in the boxes and bags of recipients.

Please take the time to register your Grange to take part in this outreach service, which will allow you to receive free materials to give to your local food bank, to senior centers, to veterans' organizations in your hometown, to place on bulletin boards in your halls and in other community

spaces, to put on tables at events your Grange takes part in and more. From placemats that can be used at your community breakfasts and dinners to yard signs that can be placed on the lawns of members whose properties are on well-traveled roadways, there are many ways your Grange can increase awareness about the ACP program.

When you register through [grange.biz/signupgrange](https://grange.biz/signupgrange) or by texting or calling National Grange Membership and Leadership Development Director Amanda Brozana Rios at 301-943-1090 and leaving a message, you will be assigned a Community Navigator - an individual that works with our partner, Oregon Institute for a Better Way, to help Granges plan for the outreach, order and packaging the materials, perform data collection and more.

Navigators - all of whom are also Grange members - will also work to collect more information about your Grange, its outreach, goals, and needs. This data will help us create future grant proposals and allow us to search for grants and other funds that may directly benefit individual Granges.

Granges that take part in this program may even be eligible for a small financial incentive, but it all starts with the first step of registering your Grange to become an outreach partner. Registering through this link does not commit your Grange, but will instead allow you to receive further information and connect with a navigator to brainstorm and talk about your Grange.



## [Register for National Grange Convention](#)



This November, we are going to “Flow into the Future” in Niagara Falls, New York as we celebrate the 157<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the National Grange. ***And we want you to be there!***

This year's Convention will be just blocks from the Falls! The [Sheraton Niagara Falls](#) is an incredible hotel which will also house the hospitality room, and the convention itself and many of the evening activities will be held at the [Niagara Falls Convention Center](#), just across the street!

Use [this link](#) to book your stay at the main Convention Hotel using our group rate.

For guests who would prefer to call, as opposed to make their reservations, please call **716-285-3361 x2295** to reach Reservation Coordinator Cierra Duck. She is typically in the office Monday through Friday 8am – 4pm Eastern).

We invite ALL Grange members to participate in the Convention activities, so please make plans to attend from November 14-18, 2023.

This is your (now late!) warning to ensure your passport is up to date. You won't want to miss the opportunity to pop over to Canada when you're just a few steps away:

<https://www.usps.com/international/passports.htm>

Stay tuned over the coming weeks and months for more information about speakers, tours, and other opportunities (both fun and educational!) for all Grange members during the Convention.

Learn more about this year's Convention and register today on the National Grange website!

**Early Bird Registration** - \$32 – open through September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

## **Register for Convention**

The Host Committee has chosen [Community Missions of Niagara](#) as the recipient of this year's community service collection. Granges and attendees are encouraged to send or bring socks, hats, or mittens for men or women to this year's Convention. If you would rather make a financial contribution, please contact Paula Turner.



## **Participate in Multigenerational Panel Discussion on Rural Mental Health**

Everyone attending the National Grange Convention is invited to attend a session about rural mental health conversations, featuring panelists representing several generations. If you will be attending the convention on Thursday, November 16 from 3:00 – 4:30 pm ET and are interested in being considered as a panelist, please complete [this form](#).

This panel is co-presented by the National Grange, [Rural Minds](#), and [NY FarmNet](#).

**Note** that due to a limit on the number of panelists, your reply does not confirm your participation as a panelist. We will follow up with an email to provide you with more information.



### SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)



**\*NEW\* GRANGE SOCKS**

*Limited quantity available!*

**Show and wear your Grange Pride at various events and activities, especially at State Session!**

These Grange socks feature the Grange emblem on a navy blue sock.

They are 80% combined cotton, 15% nylon and 5% elastane.

**One size fits most**

For each pair purchased, National Grange will donate a pair of socks to the National Grange Community Service Project – Community Missions of Niagara

**\$16.00 plus shipping**

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.





# SUPPLY STORE

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

---

## "RAISED RIGHT HERE" VINYL STICKERS



*Great way to celebrate Grange month and to have at other Grange activities and events.*

**Die-Cut Vinyl Stickers** - in two designs, celebrating the National Grange "Raised Right Here" theme

*25 stickers of each design*

**\$12 for 50 stickers**  
*plus shipping*

Get yours by ordering online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

## Grange Member Benefit: ODP Business Solutions


Terms apply.

Save on

## Back-to-School Essentials

**Order Now**



### Back-to-School Ready: Save More When You Shop Online

Buying school supplies can prove costly, luckily your Grange member-only savings makes it easy for you to find good deals. Here's how ODP makes back-to-school shopping simple:

- **Shop online and get free next-business-day delivery**  
Save on thousands of products and enjoy next-business-day delivery on qualifying orders of \$50 or more within local delivery areas.\*
- **All your solutions, all in one place**  
From notebooks, backpacks, pencils and pens to cleaning supplies, use your ODP Member Savings Program and **get up to 75% off on Best Value Items.**
- **Maximize your savings with these member-only coupons!**  
Get up to \$50 off qualifying online orders. Exclusions Apply. See coupon for details. Offer valid thru 08/07/2023. [Get Coupons >](#)

[Shop Now](#)



## GRANGE JEWELRY



Grange Jewelry is now in stock at the Grange Store. Pins include years of service and member recognition pins from 5-80 years, past officer pins, Degree recognition pins, and much more!

*Some jewelry is now on clearance!*

**Prices vary**

Order online through the Grange Supply Store at [grangestore.org](http://grangestore.org) or by calling Loretta at (202) 628-3507 ext. 109.

[www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org)

## NATIONAL GRANGE

HEADQUARTERS: 1616 H ST. NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20006 | (202) 628-3507

**Publisher** Betsy Huber, National Grange President. Available to members at [betsy@nationalgrange.org](mailto:betsy@nationalgrange.org) or by phone at (484) 459-1957

**Editor** Philip J Vonada, National Grange Communications Director. Contact to submit a story idea for Patrons Chain or *Good Day!* magazine, request assistance with publicity, business cards, and more. Email [pvnada@nationalgrange.org](mailto:pvnada@nationalgrange.org) or call/text (814) 404-7985

**Leadership Training and Membership Development** Amanda Brozana Rios, National Grange Membership, and Leadership Development Director. Contact to learn more about membership recruitment or how to start or reorganize a Grange, leadership training and more. Email at [abrozana@nationalgrange.org](mailto:abrozana@nationalgrange.org) or call/text (301) 943-1090

**Legislative and Policy Issues** Director Burton Eller, *National HQ*, ext. 114 or email [beller@nationalgrange.org](mailto:beller@nationalgrange.org)

**Membership Recognition, Grange Supply Sales, Grange Programs and Member Benefits** Loretta Washington, *National HQ*, ext. 109 or email [sales@nationalgrange.org](mailto:sales@nationalgrange.org)

**Free Grange Websites, Emails, *Good Day!* subscription questions and Membership Database**  
Stephanie Wilkins, *National HQ*, ext. 101 or email [swilkins@nationalgrange.org](mailto:swilkins@nationalgrange.org)

**Junior and Youth Programming** Samantha Wilkins, [samantha@nationalgrange.org](mailto:samantha@nationalgrange.org) or (210) 838-7892

**Lecturer** Ann Bercher, [lecturer@nationalgrange.org](mailto:lecturer@nationalgrange.org) or (612) 501-1231

**Community Service** Pete Pompper [communityservice@nationalgrange.org](mailto:communityservice@nationalgrange.org) or (609) 820-6239

**Grange Foundation** Chairperson Joan C. Smith [ngfb@grange.org](mailto:ngfb@grange.org) or (571) 662-7220

